



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Maalmury, primate in 1020, who, dying in this latter year, was immediately succeeded by Awley. After him comes, A.D., 1049, Dudalche, son to primate Maalmury aforesaid; next, A.D. 1064, Melisa, son to primate Awley. Then, A.D., 1091, Donald, another son to primate Awley. After him, A.D. 1105, Kellach, or Celsus, grandson to Melisa. Then, opposed by Malachy, but still acknowledged as primate in the Irish Annals, Murtoch, son to Primate Donald, A.D. 1120; and, after him again, A.D. 1134, Niall, son of Hugh, and brother to Primate Kellach.

How much longer this interesting family succession might have gone on inheriting the chief place of dignity in the Irish Church, according to their national system of Tanistry, had not such a course been interrupted by extraneous causes, it is impossible to say. But what was thought of the system when it began to attract attention abroad, and how it came to be altered, will appear in what is to follow.

(To be continued).

THE PARISH PRIEST AND HIS PARISHIONERS.

Times of controversy are often times of trouble and annoyance to the religious instructors of the people. We sometimes think that the Roman Catholic clergy of the present day must look back with a sigh of regret to the comparatively quiet and tranquil lives which their predecessors passed in this country eighty or one hundred years ago; or, still more, to that long period of repose, which lasted from the seventh to the fifteenth century, and to which ill-natured writers have given the name of "the dark ages." In those days, the clergy led an easy life; their peace was undisturbed, and their slumber was unbroken by the angry storms of controversy. There were but few books, and no newspapers or penny posts, in those days. What little learning there was, was altogether in the hands of the priests, just as it was in ancient times among the Egyptians; and the clergy could teach the people *what* they pleased, and *how* they pleased, without fear of reproach or contradiction. If they chose to tell their flocks that purgatory or extreme unction were taught by our blessed Lord, in the gospels, the people were sure to believe them; for but few of them, from the prince to the peasant, were able to read, and fewer still had a copy of the Bible in their possession. If a priest, in his sermon, were to quote the authority of St. Augustine, or St. Chrysostom, or any other of the ancient fathers, in proof of the Pope's infallibility, he might be absolutely certain that his assertion, whether true or false, would be implicitly believed; for there was no one to contradict him. In short, with regard to all matters relating to books or learning, the people were in the condition of blind men, who, if they wished to know anything at all, were obliged to see with the priest's eyes.

Now, however, the case is widely different. Knowledge is not confined to the priesthood; the schoolmaster is abroad; and mankind can no longer be kept in the leading-strings by which, in olden times, they were wont to be led. Men have learned to read, aye, and to think for themselves; and it is no wonder that religion, the most important of all concerns, should now begin to occupy much of their thoughts. Now-a-days, if a priest, in his sermon from the altar, quotes a passage from scripture (though it is commonly said that this is not a very usual occurrence), many of his hearers have their Douay bibles at home, and can quickly tell whether the priest be right or wrong. If he brings forward any argument from the fathers, for the authority of the church, the people need not take his word for it. They can read the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, or they can go to some controversial sermon, or, in some other way they can contrive to learn both sides of the question; and those of them who are really in earnest, and anxious to be taught the truth, can lay their doubts before the priest, and ask him to remove their difficulties. From all that we can learn, however, the priests in general are not at all fond of this. They do not like to be asked questions, and no wonder; for the questions are often puzzling questions, and require a good deal of learning to answer; and the joint sagacity of the parish priest and the coadjutor are often unequal to the task, especially if they happen to have forgotten what they learned at Maynooth. And then, if by any chance they should happen to be drawn into an argument with a Protestant clergyman or layman, in the presence of any of their own flock, it is a very unpleasant thing for them to be beaten, (for such accidents will sometimes happen, even in the best regulated parishes), and to be then obliged to scold and to get angry. When people lose their temper, it is generally a sure sign that they are getting the worst of the argument. This happened not long ago to the parish priest of Ballymartyr, the day he preached his sermon about "the Rock of the Church." But, before I tell you the story, I had better explain, in the first place, how the matter came about.

Ballymartyr is thought by some persons to be the prettiest village in all Munster. It is many years since I have been there, and I do not know what changes the famine or the emigration may have made in it: but, when I knew it, it was quite a pleasure to walk or ride through it, from the contrast which it afforded to most Irish villages. It consisted chiefly of one long street of white-washed cottages, most of which were models of neatness. At one end there was a handsome nobleman's place, the road to which

was bordered by a double row of tall old trees, whose long branches had interlaced, and, in summer time, proved an effectual screen against the burning rays of the sun. The old church stood on a little hill, overlooking one end of the village; and at the other, a large new chapel had recently been erected. Altogether, it would be hard to meet with a calmer or a prettier spot.

In olden times, the Protestant clergyman and the parish priest, Father O'Reilly, used to get on very peaceably together. The former, to his shame be it said, was a careless, lazy man, who did not look after his own flock, much less the Roman Catholics. He contented himself with going through the ordinary services in church, and allowed the priest, unchecked and unheeded, to carry off, from time to time, many members of his small congregation. This was chiefly done by the promotion of mixed marriages; when these took place, the children, almost as a matter of course, went to mass; and it is in this way, as every body knows, that so many persons in Ireland are now Roman Catholics, whose grandfathers or grandmothers were Protestants. In our own day, the Protestant clergymen do their duty better, and the children of mixed marriages are often taught and brought up as Protestants, which is the reason, I suppose, why Archbishop Cullen, in his last jubilee pastoral, has pronounced such a bitter condemnation of these marriages. Had that prohibition always been in force, Ireland would have been, for the most part, a Protestant country now.

However, the old clergyman at last died, and a new one, the Rev. Mr. Smith, came to Ballymartyr, in his stead. He was a hard-working, active man, up early and late, who knew every house, and almost every person in his parish, and had a kind word for everybody. He established a relief society, to distribute food and clothing to the poor; he got up schools, and provided the best masters for them; and, in short, he left nothing undone to promote the welfare of the people. The old churchyard, as I have said, was on a hill-side, overlooking the little village; and sometimes, when any person died, and the country people, as will often happen, came in crowds to his funeral, Mr. Smith would stand on a tombstone, with his hat off, in such a position that the wind carried what he said, and would speak a word in season to them, about death and eternity, and their immortal souls, and would direct them to Jesus, the only Saviour of sinners. Emboldened by the kindly reception he met with on these occasions, and encouraged by the attention with which his remarks were received, he, at last, ventured to hold some evening lectures in his church, to discuss, in a friendly way, the principal points of controversy between the Churches of England and Rome. He is now gone to his rest, having been carried off by the famine fever, which he caught while carrying food to a starving Roman Catholic family; but his memory is still fondly cherished by the warm-hearted people among whom his life was spent.

Among the persons who used sometimes to go to these lectures, was a respectable farmer, named John Mahony. This man bore a high character among his neighbours for steadiness and good conduct. He lived in a neat cottage, at the far end of the row of trees before mentioned, and was looked upon, by Father O'Reilly, as one of the best members of his flock. He was never absent from his place at mass; his Easter dues were punctually paid, and his house was always one of the "stations" visited by the priest in his annual rounds. Some time, however, before the date of our story, one or two circumstances had occurred, which rather weakened Mahony's confidence in Father O'Reilly. One night, his wife Norah, whom he dearly loved, was taken dangerously ill—so much so, that she was not expected to live many hours. The distracted husband sent a messenger in all haste for the priest, to administer to her the last rites of the Church. The way was long, and the night wet and tempestuous, and Father O'Reilly, though not in general an indolent man, could not bring himself to leave his fireside, and persisted in saying, that the case was not so urgent as was supposed. To satisfy the importunity of the messenger, he gave him the vessel containing the holy oil,* and promised to be at the house early the next morning. When he arrived, however, Mrs. Mahony was dead.

The grief of John Mahony for the loss of his wife was much increased by the injury which he believed she had suffered from the absence of Father O'Reilly, and his vexation was augmented when the priest asked what seemed to him to be a very large sum as the price of the masses to be said for her soul. Father O'Reilly was not commonly a grating man; but the new chapel which I before mentioned had cost more money than he expected, and the balance must be made up some way or other. Mahony would have given all he possessed in the world if he thought it would save his departed wife a moment's pain; but somehow the priest's carelessness about extreme unction made

him doubt whether the masses would really help her out of purgatory. Mr. Ferguson, a gentleman of considerable learning, who lived near Mahony, and used often talk with him on the road, once made a remark on this subject which caused a very deep impression. "There are two things," said Mr. Ferguson, "which I think, if I were a Roman Catholic, I should never like in the Pope, because they seem to me to argue a great want of good nature. The one is, that he can see his children wrangle so fiercely about the sense of Scripture, and yet will not give out the infallible meaning of every place that is controverted; and the other is, that he suffers so many souls to lie in purgatory when he may let them all forth if he please, which yet he will not do, unless money is paid him." Mahony's eldest little boy used to bring home his Douay Testament from school, and his father happened one day to take it up, and opened it at the place in the Acts (chapter viii. 20), where St. Peter said to Simon Magus, who offered him money—"Keep thy money to thyself to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." "Deliverance from purgatory," said Mahony to himself, when he read these words, "is surely the gift of God; and can the priests be the true followers of St. Peter if they refuse to say masses unless they are paid for them? Is it not too bad that the advantage which the rich have over the poor in this world should last even beyond the grave?"

These feelings were shared by others in the parish besides John Mahony; but the circumstances above-mentioned caused them to take a stronger hold of his mind than of the rest. The doubts which he began to entertain of the truth of the Roman Catholic system were considerably strengthened by what he heard at one or two of Mr. Smith's lectures. He took more interest than he had hitherto done in the discussion of the points of difference between the two churches, and he used sometimes talk the matter over with one or two of his neighbours on an evening, after the work of the day was done. Father O'Reilly quickly discovered that several of his flock were beginning to think for themselves, and the discovery caused him no small alarm. He had denounced Mr. Smith's lectures from the altar; but the curiosity of the people had been excited, and although they stopped attending them for a time, after a little while they came as freely to the lectures as before. What was Father O'Reilly to do? After long deliberation, when he found that he could not silence Mr. Smith, he determined to try and meet him at his own weapons, by taking up the controversy himself. Accordingly notice was given in the parish that on the following Sunday, after last mass, Father O'Reilly would preach a sermon on the authority of the Church. Great interest was excited by this notice, and the chapel was crowded to excess.

Father O'Reilly took for his text the well-known passage of St. Matthew's Gospel (xvi. 18)—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." On these words he delivered a long and clever address to his flock; in the course of which he did not spare the Bible-readers, who were causing him so much trouble and uneasiness. "Protestants," said he, "are always talking about the Bible, and arguing out of the Bible; but why won't they listen to *all* that the Bible says? Did not our Blessed Lord declare, in words so plain that the children yonder can understand them, that St. Peter was to be the rock on which the holy Catholic Church was to be built?—'Thou art Peter,' said he. Now, Peter means a rock; and will any man tell me where this rock is to be found, except in our holy father the Pope and the Catholic Church? Stand out before me and the congregation, any of you that go sneaking along in the dark to listen to Parson Smith. 'Tis well seen that you are ashamed of what you're doing, leaving the Church in which you were born and bred, to follow a ranting Methodist like him. Stand out before me, and tell me, if any of you can, on what rock is Parson Smith's Church built? Can he claim any share in St. Peter, when, as everybody knows, the name of Protestant was never thought or heard of until the time of the turncoat, Luther, about three hundred years ago? You say you want to belong to Christ's Church; and how can you belong to it, if you leave the Church that is built on St. Peter, the rock and foundation-stone that Christ himself laid? And where would you look for St. Peter's Church, if not in the holy Church of Rome? The blessed St. Peter lived at Rome, and died at Rome. His bones are under the high-altar, where the Pope himself says Mass. The Catholic Church is not like your new-fangled Protestant sects—it is as old as St. Peter himself; it has existed from the very beginning of Christianity; it has grown and spread to the furthest corners of the world, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it!"

"This, and much more to the same purport, and sup-

* A similar occurrence happened, a short time since, in the West of Ireland. The survivor shortly after became a Protestant. The writer had an interesting conversation, about three summers ago, in Switzerland, with an intelligent Chamouni guide, which shows how sensitive Roman Catholics are to these instances of neglect. "There are seven priests," said he, "in Chamouni; sometimes they all go off together to the town of Servoz to amuse themselves; and if any person is sick, he may die during their absence. Now, the priests are always telling us that if we die without the rites of the Church, we shall be badly off in the next world, and yet they go away themselves, and expose us to this very danger. They must either be very hard-hearted men," he added, "or else they cannot believe what they tell us."

* If our friend Mahony's reading had extended to the history of the Council of Trent, he would have seen that some of the learned Fathers of that body were quite of his way of thinking. They proposed to decree that the sacraments should be given for nothing, and that not only should the priest ask for nothing, but that he should accept of nothing. "Freely ye have received," said the Gospel (Matt. x. 6), "freely give." Their advice, however, was rejected by the rest. The great majority of the venerable men who composed the Council could not find it in their hearts to assent to such a liberal scheme, which would for ever dry up some of the richest sources of their wealth. Their feelings, in fact, seem to have corresponded pretty closely with those of the miser in "Old Mortality"—"I cannot do it, Ailie, I cannot do it—I cannot part with the siller." And so they left the old usages and abuses as they found them.—Vide Father Paul Sarpi, Hist. Conc. Trid. lib. ii. § 87.

ported by a good deal of learning, was delivered with great energy—for Father O'Reilly was terribly in earnest—and he ended by denouncing a heavy curse against any person who should venture to go near Mr. Smith for the future. The crowd of people dispersed: some praised Father O'Reilly up to the skies, for they had never heard him preach such a sermon before, and the unwonted display of learning had quite overcome them. "Isn't he the great preacher entirely?" said one to another. "What a power of learning he has in his head! Well, it is a fine thing, surely, to have a priest that knows all the old writers, with the big, jaw-breaking names! No one ever heard the like of that from Parson Smith. Poor man! 't would be long before he could preach such a sermon; he speaks so simple-like, that he's fit only for the children to listen to. Father O'Reilly would settle him at once."

John Mahony was, of course, in his place in chapel that morning, and was one of the most attentive listeners to the sermon. He was a good deal perplexed by Father O'Reilly's confident assertions, that all the old writers, from the earliest times, acknowledged St. Peter to be the rock of the Church. "If the only true Church," thought he, "is built on St. Peter, and if the Church of Rome is built on him, and the Pope is his successor, mustn't we be safe if we stay in that Church? Sure, all the learned people that lived long ago can't be wrong; and why should we give up the old Church, even though the priests are careless, griping men?" As he was walking slowly home, intent on these thoughts, he met Mr. Ferguson on the road. The latter had heard some rumours about the sermon, and was curious to know what Father O'Reilly had said. Mahony was glad of the opportunity of telling his doubts to a clever, sensible man, like Mr. Ferguson; and almost before this gentleman had time to put a few questions to him, Mahony began to relate the scene which took place in the chapel, as well as he could remember it. He was just in the middle of the sermon, when who should come up but Father O'Reilly himself, looking rather heated, after his morning's work. The parish priest was on pretty intimate terms with Mr. Ferguson, for he was naturally of a sociable turn; and besides, one of the near relatives of the latter was a wealthy Roman Catholic, at whose house they frequently met. The following conversation then took place:

Mr. Ferguson.—Good morning, Father O'Reilly, I hear you had a fine congregation at Mass to-day.

Father O'Reilly.—True for you, Mr. Ferguson, and glad would I have been to have seen you in the front of them all, by the side of your worthy uncle. Who knows but you may become a Catholic yet?

Mr. Ferguson.—My friend Mahony has been telling me a little of the sermon you preached; and there are one or two things that I would be glad to have cleared up, if you have time to listen to me now.

Father O'Reilly.—With all the pleasure in life.

Mr. Ferguson.—Is it not the case, Father O'Reilly, that every parish priest, when he gets his benefice, takes a solemn oath that he will never interpret Scripture, except according to the unanimous consent of the ancient Fathers?

Father O'Reilly.—It is the case; and this is the great advantage which the Catholic Church possesses over all the Protestant sects. A Protestant parson may turn and twist Scripture as he pleases, according to what he calls his private judgment; but we know that we must be right, when we follow the unanimous teaching of the great doctors of the Catholic Church.

Mr. Ferguson.—Mahony tells me that you were proving in your sermon to-day, that St. Peter is the rock on which Christ said he would build his Church. Now, do all the Fathers agree in this interpretation of St. Matthew's words?

Father O'Reilly.—Certainly they do—that is, not exactly all; there may be one or two, perhaps, that differ a little; but they are not worth mentioning. Tertullian, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, Epiphanius, and all the great divines of the Church, all teach that St. Peter was the rock.

Mr. Ferguson.—The reason I ask you the question is, that I was lately reading on this very subject; and I copied in my note-book some of the passages I met with, that seemed to deny that St. Peter was the rock. Perhaps, as you are fresh from your sermon, you might be able to explain them to me.

So saying, he pulled his note-book out of his pocket, and began to turn over the pages. Father O'Reilly began to feel a little uneasy. The fact was, that, notwithstanding his confident manner, his learning was by no means profound, and he was rather alarmed by the cool, quiet, determined way, in which Mr. Ferguson was going on. However, as Mahony was obviously listening with eager interest to the conversation, he felt that it would never do for him to shrink from the discussion. The conversation then proceeded as follows:—

Mr. Ferguson.—The learned writer, Origen, who lived about 200 years after Christ, in his explanation of this very text in St. Matthew, writes as follows*—"He is the Rock, whosoever is a disciple of Christ. If thou thinkest that the whole Church is built by God upon Peter alone, what wilt

thou say of John the son of Thunder, and of each of the other apostles? Shall we dare to say that the gates of hell shall not prevail only against Peter? Or are the keys of the kingdom of heaven given only to Peter?"

Now, what do you say to this, Father O'Reilly?

Father O'Reilly.—Oh! every one knows that Origen was a heretic. Who would go to learn the doctrine of the Catholic Church from the like of such a fellow as that?

Mr. Ferguson.—Well, I am willing to admit that Origen, with all his learning, did hold some strange notions; yet, for all that, he seems here to speak good common sense. And though he was a heretic on some points, yet many of your own divines, Father O'Reilly, are very glad to praise him, and make much of him, because in two or three places, he talks like a man who had some glimmering notions about purgatory, (which was the chief subject, by the way, on which his opinions were condemned as erroneous by the ancient Church). But we will let Origen alone. Have you any fault to find with St. Augustine?

Father O'Reilly.—No; St. Augustine was a sound orthodox father, and he is one of the chief authorities I quoted in my sermon. Did you ever read what he says in one of his discourses (Serm. xv., de Sanctis) "The Lord called Peter the foundation of his Church; and, therefore, the Church deservedly venerates this foundation stone on which the lofty ecclesiastical edifice is built?"

Mr. Ferguson.—Yes; I know Cardinal Bellarmine quotes that passage; but if you had looked into the edition of St. Augustine's works, published by the learned Benedictine editors, they would have told you that this discourse was none of Augustine's. But I suppose you were misled by your Breviary which makes the very same mistake as Bellarmine.

Father O'Reilly.—Well, you cannot deny that he wrote the following words (Psalm. cont. par. Don.)—"Reckon up the priests who have sat in the seat of Peter. This is the rock which the gates of hell cannot conquer."

Mr. Ferguson.—Did you never read the Retractions of St. Augustine, Father O'Reilly?

Father O'Reilly.—No!

Mr. Ferguson.—For if you had, you would have seen that this eminent Father changed his mind upon the interpretation of this very text. "I wrote in a certain place," saith he, "of the Apostle Peter, that the Church was built upon him, as upon a rock;" but I know that afterwards I very frequently expounded our Lord's words—"Upon this rock I will build my Church"—as referring to Christ, whom Peter confessed, saying—"Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Of these two opinions, let the reader choose whichever is the most probable.*

Now, did you give your congregation this liberty of choice, Father O'Reilly?

Father O'Reilly.—No! why should I? Cock them up with a choice indeed! What right have they to choose, when the Catholic Church has already settled the question?

Mr. Ferguson.—Well, you see St. Augustine, at any rate, thought that Christian people had a right to choose for themselves in this matter. But there is another passage in which he expresses his meaning yet more plainly, in his comment on the last chapter of St. John's Gospel (Tract cxxiv.), "The Lord said, 'upon this rock I will build my Church,' because Peter had said 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.' Upon this rock, saith he, which thou hast confessed, will I build my Church. For the Rock was Christ, on which foundation even Peter himself was built. 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. iii. 11).† There is no possibility of mistaking the meaning of these words: even a child could understand them. But I fear I am trying your patience, Father O'Reilly, so we will go on if you please to another orthodox writer. Did you quote St. Chrysostom as one of your authorities?

Father O'Reilly.—No; I do not think I did.

Mr. Ferguson.—Well, perhaps, you were right, for I fear any reference to St. Chrysostom would have rather spoiled your argument. In his comment on this text (Matt. xvi. 18.), he says—"Upon this rock I will build my Church—that is, on the faith of his confession (πορευετις τῇ πίστει τῆς ἀποκρίσεως). And again, in his homily on St. John (i. 49) "Christ saith, that he would build his Church on Peter's confession."‡ And I could give you the names of a whole host of fathers—Hilary, Cyril of Alexandria, and many others—who agree with St. Chrysostom in his interpretation. One of them in particular, Theodoret, remarks very sensibly—"Our Lord permitted the first of the apostles, whose confession he fixed as a prop and foundation of the Church, to be shaken."¶ He seems to have thought that if Christ had fixed St. Peter's person as the foundation of his Church, instead of his confession, the Church would have been shaken when Peter so shamefully denied his Lord. Perrone, a distinguished controversial writer of your own Church, in giving an account of the opinions of the fathers on this text, reckons up seventeen as interpreting our Lord's words of St. Peter's person directly; while of those who interpret them as referring to Peter's confession of faith, there are no less than forty-four!‡ So now, Father O'Reilly, what becomes of your

"unanimous consent of the fathers," which you are sworn to follow in the interpretation of Scripture?

Father O'Reilly.—How can you expect me to mind all that the fathers have said? They may have been mistaken sometimes; and we are only bound to follow them, when the doctrine which they deliver agrees with that of the Catholic Church.

Mr. Ferguson.—What you have just said reminds me of a story I once heard about a lady who was excusing herself, to a friend, from the charge of having acted contrary to her husband's injunctions—"I promised," she said, "to obey my husband; and so I will, gladly, if he will only let me have my own way!" So, in like manner, you are willing enough to follow the fathers, on condition that they will only teach in accordance with what you believe to be the doctrines of the Catholic Church. But what you will say if I can produce you the authority of a Pope who contradicts what you said to-day in your sermon?

Father O'Reilly.—That is quite impossible! The Catholic Church has always taught the same doctrine, and always steadfastly maintained that the person of the blessed Apostle Peter was the rock on which it was founded.

Mr. Ferguson.—Perhaps you think so; but, nevertheless, Pope Gregory the Great thought differently. "Persist," saith he, "in the true faith, and establish and fix your life upon the rock of the Church—that is upon the confession of blessed Peter."*

Father O'Reilly.—I declare, Mr. Ferguson, you are enough to drive a man out of his senses! How can I tell that you haven't been quoting a pack of lies to me, taken out of some heretical book?

Mr. Ferguson.—Well, Father O'Reilly, I am quite ready to give you exact references to all my authorities when you are at leisure; and, as you are so hard to be persuaded, perhaps you would like to know that Pope Leo I. and Pope Felix III., and Pope Adrian I., and various other popes, all agreed, more or less, with Pope Gregory the Great; so that if the doctrine of the Church of Rome is not now what it was in their time, perhaps it has changed for the worse, that's all. But there is one question more which I would like to ask you before we part. Did you ever know that the Council of Trent declared that it was Peter's confession, and not Peter's person, which was the rock of the Church?

Father O'Reilly.—Do you mean to say, that you know the doctrine of the Council of Trent better than I do? Well, some people's impudence is surprising!

Mr. Ferguson.—Don't get angry, Father O'Reilly. Anger will never help a man a bit nearer to the truth. I was quite serious in what I said about the Council of Trent. In its third session, speaking of the Nicene Creed, it says, "Wherefore the Council has thought good that the symbol of faith, which the Holy Roman Church makes use of, as being that principle wherein all who profess the faith of Christ must necessarily agree, and that firm and only foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, be expressed in the same words in which it is read in all the Churches."† Here you see that the Council of Trent declares, that the faith of the Church, as embodied in this creed, is the rock and foundation of the Church. Now, the Nicene Creed is fully and cordially believed by the United Church of England and Ireland, as well as by the Church of Rome; and, therefore, even by the showing of the Council of Trent, the members of the Church of England rest upon the one true foundation. But we do not need to rely upon the word of any man, or any set of men, in a matter of such vital importance. We are told in the Bible (1 Cor. iii. 11), "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." He is the "tried corner stone" (as he is called by St. Peter in his first Epistle), which was laid by God himself (1 Pet. ii. 6); and, if we build our hopes of salvation on him, we shall be safe for time and for eternity. Whatever be the exact meaning of the text in Matthew, whether the "Rock of the Church" be the confession of Peter, or Christ, whom he confessed, or Peter himself making this confession, one thing is clear from this, as well as other passages of Scripture, that Christ alone is the foundation on which a Christian ought to build. If we look away from Christ, and seek to rest the fabric of our hopes upon any fallible and contradictory interpretations of the fathers, or upon any branch of the visible Church, which is liable to error and corruption in the lapse of centuries, we may find out our mistake when it is too late!‡

Father O'Reilly's patience had long been exhausted, and his temper was too much ruffled to allow him to reply, after the ill success of his previous efforts. He snatched the bridle from the hand of Mahony, who, all this time, had been leading his horse, and rode off without even the courtesy of bidding Mr. Ferguson good bye.

patres qui verba Christi Matt. xvi. de Petri persona directe intellexerunt; tales sunt xvii. Secunda classis eos exhibet patres qui exponunt eadem Christi verba, Tu es Petrus, &c., de fidei confessione a Petro edita, quatuor nempe supra quadraginta."

* "In verâ fide persistite, et vitam vestram in petrâ ecclesiæ, hoc est, in confessione beati Petri apostolorum principis solidatæ." Op. Greg. M. Ep. iii. 33.

† Quare symbolum fidei, quo sancta Ecclesia Romanæ utitur, tanquam principium illud, in quo omnes qui fidem Christi profitentur necessario conveniant, ac fundamentum firmitatis ac unicuique, contra quod portæ inferni nunquam prævalerunt (Matt. xvi.) totidem verba, quibus in omnibus ecclesiis legitur exprimendum esse censet.—Decret. S.S. Conc. Trid. Sess. iii.

* Op. S. Aug., vol. i., col. 32, Par. 1679. † Ib. vol. iii., col. 822.

‡ Op. S. Chrys., vol. viii., p. 616. Paris, 1836.

§ Ib. vol. viii., p. 138.

¶ Super hanc igitur confessionis petram ecclesiæ edificatio est—Hil. de Trin., vi. It would be tedious to cite all the passages

¶ Op. Theod. Ep. lxxvii.

** Vide Perrone, Præl. Theol. i., 911—"Prima classis complectitur eos

* We have thought it right to supply the references to Mr. Ferguson's quotations. The above passage is found in Origen, Tom. iii. p. 324-5. Paris, 1739.